

The BULLETIN

Of The

Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association

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Bryan Barker, Editor

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Of The

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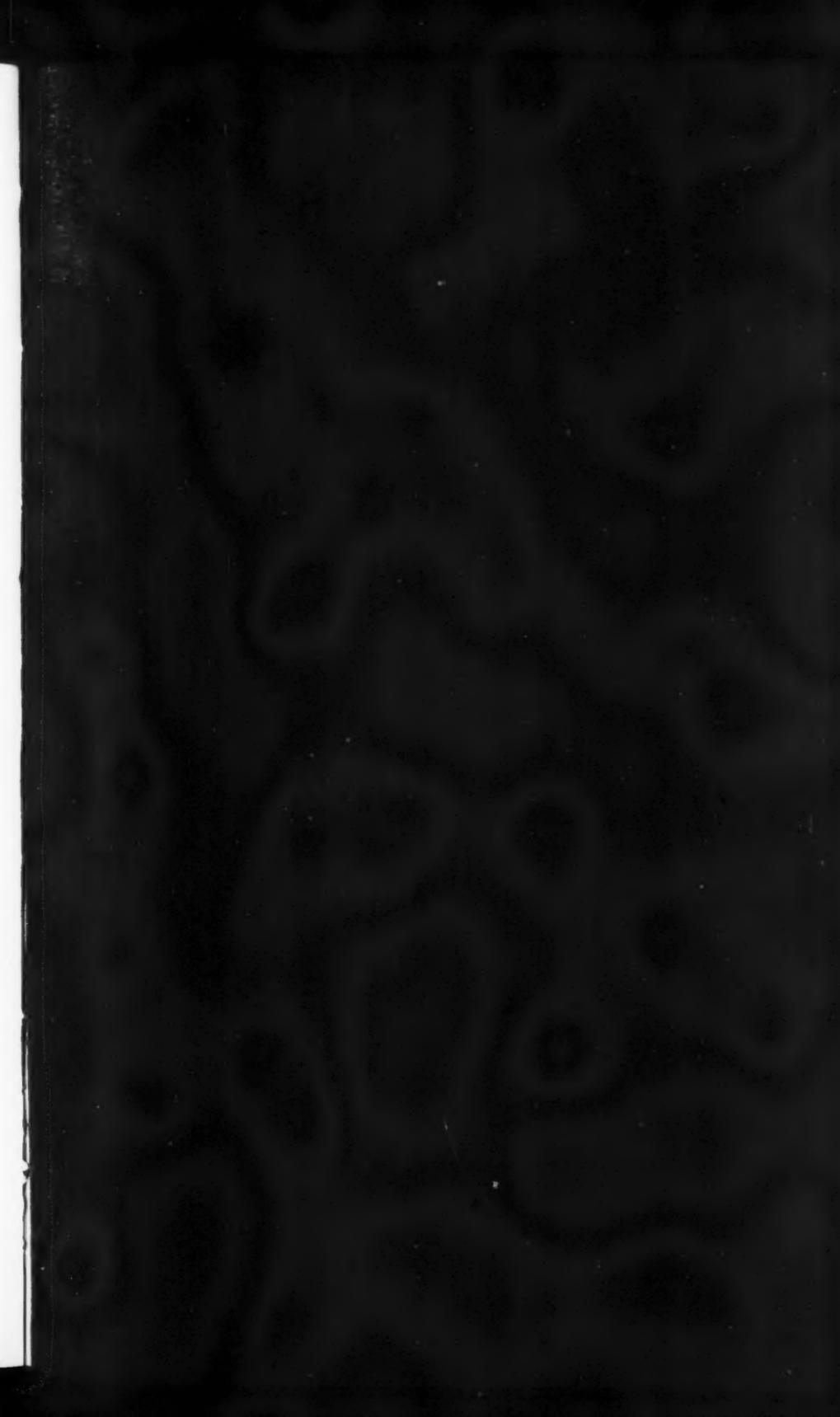
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'I Am New At This Business Of Journalism'

By Mrs. Janice Schmitt

The editor of this publication asked the newly-appointed adviser of "The Mountaineer" of Montclair High School, Montclair, N. J., to write down some thoughts about the "new world" she was "seeing," etc., for the first time.

It was interesting news to the faculty, frightening news to me, and startling news to the students when I was asked to be adviser to The Mountaineer. It was all kinds of news, because neophyte as I was and still remain, the paper had been pulling down all sorts of awards, and to change hands, so to speak, at this happy juncture was to court dismal disaster.

I am new at this business of journalism. Layout work, headline counts, captions, film packs, leads — all these were as clear to me as the theory of relativity. But I had the assignment of learning, the responsibility of teaching, and so I regarded it all as a challenge.

There have been factors working for me. For one thing, the previous adviser, now head of our department of English, is on hand to question in matters of technique or policy. I seek her advice as seldom as possible, because I do not want the students to feel a lack of confidence in me. Still, she is there when we need her.

Another factor which worked in our behalf was the use of excellent text material which we worked on for five weeks before we went to press. We use *Scholastic Journalism* by English and Hach and *Experiences in Journalism* by Mulligan. We discussed and read aloud origi-

nal writing from book assignments. This gave me an acquaintance with individual skills. It gave rise to helpful discussion of such items as editorializing and placing emphasis in a news story where it properly belongs. I must add that there is a temptation to de-emphasize text book work after the realities of publication arrive. For my part, there is not time. As for the student, once he sees his words in print, he is apt to think of himself as an old hand at the game who needs no further help.

A vital element in successful school journalism is leadership. We elect all our editors and writers and everyone has a job. But it is important that the editor in chief is not elected as so many student officers are, on the basis of popularity alone. I told the class beforehand the high qualifications an editor should have. I frightened them, probably, by picturing a paragon of literary and personality perfection. I knew who I wanted as editor, but I wanted them to want him too. So I read his work aloud, read others' work aloud, and their conclusions turned up in the winning vote I had hoped for.

Humor is my major problem. Neither the students nor I are satisfied with what passes as wit. Teenagers have their own little jokes

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and jargon. They find humor in *double entendre* situations which I must be constantly alert to delete. They are not subtle, and when they are, it may take the form of disparagement which is, of course, odious to the administration. We have no budding Thurbers or Leacocks, but fifty per cent of the boys are under this glorious illusion. It would be cruel to disenchant them and my only attack is to reiterate that humor must be clean, kind, and, if possible, funny.

Probably the most ticklish of all problems is that of deadlines. "I couldn't get the story, because —" And then will flow all the eloquent excuses known to man. At first I was sympathetic; now I turn a deaf ear and grade the story down. The mark is still king!

Another trap I have fallen into is the news source which turns out to have nothing to it. "It's a great story," they'll say. "Give it space for 400 words." Then when the page is laid out and the reporter sent to cover the story, we find that there is literally nothing for release at all. We had this situation with a story on the Senior Council. It had been noised around that senior officers had made some plans, so we set out to give the news space and big pictures. A faculty adviser, questioned about these activities, had no such news to publish. The group had not even officially met, and there we were with a lot of empty space. This last minute racing around for stories is poor management, and the students now know that such unverified news sources deserve the failing mark they get.

Did Confucius ever say, "He who has a good photographer leads a life of melodious days?" We are only just beginning to coordinate pictures and print. By "good" photo-

grapher, I mean one who organizes his appointments, knows vertical from horizontal, keeps supplies well-stocked, and works closely with layout editors. He must be taught at the very outset the value of organization, and of taking pictures well in advance for the very obvious reason that some may have to be taken again. We have one staff photographer and one free-lance, only recently recruited. The staff photographer himself now keeps a notebook of all pictures to be taken. He marks the picture for page and article number, name of story writer, and whether the picture is to be vertical or horizontal. We like good pictures, of course. We want lively composition, but as beginners, we want the *pictures*. Next issue, if we get all finished photographs on the same day that we take copy to the printer, it will be the first time.

A word about our class, and it may very well be yours too. We are not conformists, generally speaking. The very nature of the student who wants to express himself in a humor column, an editorial, a feature, is not the one who is the most tractable. He has ideas. He argues. He explores. He is not modest. He values his own opinions. And that is the way it should be. But in a class where the team spirit should prevail, it is not always easy for the adviser to bring these divergent elements into harmony. I have found that I must be skillful in my criticism, for the students should not feel that they are being "whipped" into shape.

I have met the challenge at least half way. The rewards are rich ones. I shall never forget the excitement that reigned in Room 114 when the first copy came from the printer. "Did it come?" they asked in disbelief, and not the least incredulous was the adviser.

'Poetry Is The Image Of Experience Reflected In The Pool Of Thought'

By Frances Smith Johnson

The adviser of "The Advocate," school magazine of the Senior High School, New Brunswick, N. J., here writes sympathetically and attractively on a somewhat difficult topic, poetry. What follows is really a resume of a talk, "School Poetry," she gave last March at the CSPA convention "to a room packed with young, eager faces."

Your poetry is you in shorthand. It is a brief capturing of the essence of your experience, be it sight, sound, smell, taste or feel. It is yours completely.

Since this is so, no one can tell you what to write, or how to write for you are the media, the receptor, the transmitter, the emotion and its expression. All that you have to do to write poetry is to perceive keenly, and to set down your interpretation.

If you wish your poem to be for yourself only, you are at liberty to transcribe it in symbols meaningful to yourself alone. You may use disjointed words, made-up syllables, broken phrases, even as the ultra painters and sculptors use fractured lines and ruptured colors. Much of the immature contemporary art today seems to be based on such an introverted desire, and as such it is perfectly valid.

However, one of the aims of poetry, or of any other art form, is communication, the capturing of emotion in such terms that it may be comprehended by and be valid for others beside the artist. If you wish to communicate, you are obligated to use symbols of color, form, or words which carry, for your audience as well as for yourself, not only the exact meaning which you wish to express, but also the shades of overtones which you wish to imply. It will be necessary, also,

to write in a form appropriate to the theme, in meter and rhyme or breath pattern which will augment the understanding which you wish to convey. You may find, it is true, many examples of poetry from the past which, although sad and sombre in tone, may jingle along. But do not be misled by such verses. It is our present responsibility to initiate, to develop, to say what we have to say in the form which is the most characteristic, the most convincing. It is up to us to use the idiom of our times, the fresh, the piquant, the stimulating metaphor or simile. Yet it is wise to be chary in the use of slang, for nothing dates a poem more accurately than the dead and dying vernacular, the transitory reference.

You, then, are a poet with something to say about an experience. How shall you say it? Roughly, you must choose between two types

WOMEN ADVISERS NOTE:

The Advisers Tea to be given on Friday, March 11, during the 31st convention of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association will be held at the Men's Faculty Club at 400 West 117th Street from 3 to 5:30 p.m.

Women advisers are cordially invited to "drop in" on this tea—"it's on the house"—and not feel they shouldn't go because it is held at a men's club.

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of poetry, humorous verse and real poetry. The first is perhaps the harder to write for humor depends upon exact form, brevity and a twist of circumstance or phrase which must be clever, spontaneous, and startling to be amusing.

Serious poetry, on the other hand, hits you where you live. It is precious to you because it clarifies your nebulous imaginings, articulates your inarticulate thoughts. When you read a real poem, you say, "Yes, that's exactly how it is! Why didn't I say that?" When you write such a poem, you will have taken an experience and set it irrevocably apart, made it intense, given it interpretation and rich meaning. The poem will be you in a moment of time. Again, no one can tell you what to write, or how to write; your poem, however, to be real must be true, must be truer than truth in that it must interpret the imagination of the moment, even though with the next breath you may write another poem which carries a diametrically opposed idea. Your poem, to raise the hackles along the spine, to send the chills of recognition to your fingertips, must have verity for you and for your reader.

There are, perhaps, four steps in the creation of a poem: experience, contemplation, interpretation, and surgery.

Look around you. Grasp the stuff of poetry in every moment of your life. Note details, see, hear, taste, feel, live. Experiencing may be a lonely affair or it may be a gregarious adventure, only it must affect you.

The second step must be taken in solitude. Contemplate. Seldom do you write in the scarlet fire of immediate reaction. Poetry is the image of experience reflected in the pool of thought. Remembered moments glow on the surface like

the sea of stars on the dark of a lake, then seem to expand into broader patterns the longer, the more intensely you watch them. You write from a stored memory. You write in shorthand, setting down the essence of the generative occasion, pointing it up with highlights and shadows so that it stands out vividly; pouring yourselves into the summation of translation.

For the second step runs naturally and gradually into the third, interpretation. Your experience becomes more and more vivid so you evaluate and illuminate it for yourself.

So, having created your poem, you have reached a moment of decision. Is your poem to be for yourself alone? If so, whatever you have written is valid. Or, as an artist, do you wish to communicate? If you want even one person beside yourself to participate with you in understanding, you are now ready for the most dreadful step, surgery. Alone, in the cold daylight, be willing to carve your image back to its essentials, be ready to test each word for exact meaning and for the flocks of connotations which may enrich or becloud your poem. Then take your poem to one whose taste and judgment you trust, a friend or a teacher, and ask, "Have I said what I meant?"

That question contains the agony of writing. Be willing to change words which have over-tones of which you had not thought; be eager to simplify phrases, to delete where you have enlarged. Be true to your original concept, but work for clarity.

But whatever you do, give yourself the joy of writing your notes of experience relieved through contemplation, interpreted through your personality, refined by surgery to the marrow of meaning. Your poetry is YOU in shorthand.

Effectiveness Of Publications As Public Relations Media

By James T. Craig

Adviser, "The Olathe Eagle," Olathe Senior High School, Olathe, Kansas.

Probably the primary function of a school newspaper is to "entertain" the students. But with all the pro and con arguments concerning the merits of such features as the gossip column, etc., it is sometimes doubtful (at least from the criticisms the students give) whether school publications are even achieving this goal.

There is, however, a highly-important facet in the purpose of school newspapers that is often-times overlooked by advisers. This is the role that the school publications should take as public relations media. Too often the newspapers published by schools, whether they are college, high school, or junior high, are considered as sort of private property and not to be released from their ivory towers. But such is not their fate according to statistical data. Polls conducted by the writer of this article have indicated that at least 75 per cent of the students take their school papers home where they are perused, rather critically, by their parents. Such being the case, is it not advisable to take advantage of this patronage and let these school papers share part of the load of public relations? The author, for the past ten years, has found this avenue most effective in his job as public relations chairman for a city teachers organization.

Granted, the wails of students become excruciatingly vociferous when they decide that "their" newspaper is being used to exploit news

or promote campaigns in which they seemingly have no interest; but this obstacle may be overcome if the adviser is careful not to desecrate the hallowed columns with too much of the "corny stuff," as it is referred to by a large majority of the students.

The question naturally follows where to draw the line on news earmarked primarily for the consumption of adult readers.

Most school newspapers do a good job of covering sports, school plays, operettas, assemblies, etc., in their columns, but older readers are also interested in the classroom projects, activities of clubs, and school-sponsored social functions. And these readers are entitled to information about the schools other than such banal bits as "who was seen with whom at the candy shop whispering sweet nothings in each other's ears."

It is not necessarily the job of the adviser to write the public relations articles — many students can be invited to share in the task. It has been the experience of this adviser that students often become truly interested in their public relations write-up assignments, even to the point of their having asked to be assigned, permanently, to the challenging job.

There lies, of course, a danger in the fact that organizations of the community, sensing the value of the school paper for publicity, may make too many demands for support of their various activities. And

it is no easy task for the adviser to decide what groups to help and what campaigns to support.

It would seem that a flexible policy could be established at the beginning of each school year, outlining what the school newspaper will try to accomplish in the public relations field. Supporting certain drives and campaigns, such as the United Fund appeal, the Tuberculosis Christmas Seal sale, National Fire Prevention Week, the March of Dimes, National Safety Week, the Cancer Fund, the Heart Fund — to mention only a few — is an excellent public relations project for school publications. Giving publicity to these campaigns and having an occasional editorial appear in support of various drives will give the school paper an added prestige and at the same time aid in these worthwhile causes. Lethargic readers, whether they are students or parents, could be inspired to some constructive action by an idea they may accidentally read in a school newspaper.

In summation, the writer believes school publications can be most ef-

fective as public relations media. He believes it because he has seen the plan in action and observed the favorable results. He knows that parents of students are delighted with news concerning the activities of their children in the schools they support, and that the same readers are interested in items about the operation of the school plant. And finally, he is certain that the community, the state, and the nation realize the importance of school publications in the public relations field. Many school newspapers can proudly display prizes won or letters of commendation received from all three areas for their part in worthwhile public relations projects.

Advisers who have not heretofore used their school newspapers as a public relations media should give some thought toward a change in the objectives of the paper under their guidance. Public relations is everyone's job, and any help the school newspaper can give toward fostering better rapport between the school and the patrons is vitally needed.

Developing An Elementary, Junior High School Yearbook

By Harold Hainfield

Adviser, "Roosevelt Review," Roosevelt School, Union City, N. J.

What do the graduates have as memories of their years at your elementary or junior high school? In some cases, the students may purchase an autograph book which is usually filled with silly and non-meaningful quotes. Other graduates may have scrap books and paste mementoes of their graduation program in it. Everyone would like

to have something better and yet not cost too much. During the past few years, yearbook companies have developed yearbooks at a very reasonable cost to meet the needs of the elementary and junior high school. Consider these costs: 100 copies of a 16 page staple-bound yearbook for \$225 or 50 copies of a 24 page spiral-bound yearbook at

\$165. Does this sound too expensive?

In the photo-offset or lithographed method of printing, many money saving features are possible. The students, assisted by the adviser, paste material on mounting boards furnished by the yearbook companies. This reduces the cost of linotype and the expense of cuts. While certain types of enlargements or reductions are not possible, the low-cost offset yearbook will give the school an annual that the administration will be proud of and the students will cherish for many years to come.

This form of inexpensive school journalism can be an interesting project for 8th or 9th graders. I have seen interesting yearbooks prepared by 6th grade students too, where the school program is based on a 6-3-3 year cycle. Much of the material is supplied by the company. As part of the yearbook contract, you will be furnished with a number of 11 x 14-inch blank pages. The students, under supervision of the teacher-adviser, arrange and paste the material on these pages. Our eighth graders type the write-ups about the students, clubs, and classes. Others are responsible for the necessary photography and art to carry out the theme. A supply of rubber cement, art directions, theme suggestions, and a dummy are also supplied to the adviser.

A general plan for the elementary or junior high school yearbook should include a title page, including picture and location of the school, with the class publishing the book and the year of publication. Another page would be devoted to the school administration, with pictures of the faculty, principal, superintendent of schools, and members of the Board of Education.

The graduate section might follow, with pictures and write-ups about the individual student. On the junior high school level, it might be possible to expand the book and include pictures of all the school. A larger volume of sales results. Seventh and eighth graders can usually afford the dollar or dollar-and-a-half required for purchase of the yearbook.

The school activity section could follow this. This could include pictures of class activities and the extra-curricular program. Write-ups describing the classes, clubs, and athletic games and teams should be with the pictures. The class directory and booster page could follow. We have used the booster page idea rather than ads so as not to compete with local merchants and the high school seniors in their yearbook. Patrons pay 50 cents to have their name listed on the booster page.

Yearbooks at the elementary and junior high level have an important place in the school-community relations program. Phases of the school program and newer methods used can be brought to the attention of the parents in the activities section of the yearbook. The school library staff, for example, can be shown in the library and, with an appropriate write-up describe this activity. Newer methods and materials of instruction can be depicted with a picture of the audio-visual squad and some of the equipment. In a similar manner, phases of the music, fine and industrial arts, and home economics program can be shown in an elementary or junior high annual. In all shots, include students participating in some phase of the activity.

What coverage is given to the school intramural program in the local newspaper? The high school athlete receives quite a bit of pub-

licity. Frequently, the place where these students receive their initial sports instruction, the elementary and junior high intramural program, is not covered by the local press. Pictures and write-ups can bring out this phase of the school program.

The school's service to the community can be shown in your elementary or junior high yearbook. Red Cross activities conducted by the school such as overseas kits and favors for veterans in hospitals can be a part of the school annual. The safety activities of the school patrol, the Junior Hi-Y group, the Future Farmers could also be shown. Also include a picture and a small write-up about the P. T. A. If the budget is a little tight, they can always be counted on for a five or ten dollar contribution to help keep the project out of the red.

Special activities unique to the school should also be included. For example, one of our teachers is a Red Cross First Aid instructor. All eighth grade students receive the Junior Red Cross first aid course as part of their regular curriculum. Pictures of a number of students all bandaged up or administering artificial respiration make excellent action shots for our elementary school yearbook. Pictures, write-ups, and the certificates that each student receives is shown in our book.

Another activity that is unusual is the repair of dolls and toys by the upper grade boys and girls in their Home Economics and Industrial Arts class. These are distributed to a nearby orphanage at Christmas. While both of these activities have been written up in the local press, putting pictures and descriptions of these activities in the yearbook permits my principal and superintendent of schools the opportunity of showing a more complete picture of

the school when they take the yearbook to meetings throughout the state.

What about the students — do they enjoy working on the yearbook staff? From the experience of eight annuals at Roosevelt School, I can definitely say that they do. It is a project in which almost all of the students can participate. The pictures for the title page and activities section can be taken by eighth or ninth graders. They have the cameras with flash attachments and are capable of taking excellent pictures. On some occasions, these students also have dark rooms, with developing and enlarging equipment. In some school there may be a camera club with this necessary equipment. If the talent and equipment are available, use it for the benefit of your yearbook.

Art work necessary to carry out the theme can be done by the more capable students. These drawings are made with black India ink. The typing for the individual write-ups of each graduate and the activities can also be done by the students. With a little training three or four students can be taught to do an excellent job. Care must be taken with the typed material. This is the print that is reproduced in the offset reproduction method. A clean set of keys and a new ribbon are essential before starting. Another important point: always use the same typewriter for all written work. Too many types will spoil the appearance of the annual. Letters for heads are supplied by the yearbook company. These are pasted in place by the students.

We have had a school photographic service take the graduates' individual pictures. The school is under no financial obligation when taking this school photo service. The company takes the pictures on

speculation. The students are offered a packet of pictures that include one 5 x 7-inch, two 3 x 5-inch and 24 small wallet-sized pictures for two dollars. The student can purchase this packet or part of it if he wishes. The company furnishes the school with two glossy prints of each student for use in the yearbook. The yearbook fund receives 20 per cent of the sale which can be applied to the cost of film and flash bulbs.

When the pictures, write-ups, heads, and art work are finished, they are pasted neatly on the sheets and sent to the company for re-

production. In eight to ten weeks, the printed material is returned to the school ready for the students to assemble. They put the pages in the proper order and staple or use the plastic spirals to bind the book together.

Developing responsibility and cooperation on the part of students should be encouraged at all levels of education. Staff members on the elementary or junior high school annual are afforded this opportunity. Give the students the opportunity to develop a yearbook during these school years. A big and pleasant surprise is in store.

Have You Considered A News Magazine For Your School?

By John V. Field

The Assistant Professor of Journalism at the University of Michigan and the Director of the Michigan Interscholastic Press Association puts together some random thoughts on a topic that will command more attention, The Bulletin editor thinks, before this decade has ended.

One basic misconception which seems to head so many school paper staffs down a long and worrisome sidetrack is the idea that for some strange reason the school paper should be imitative of the city daily (and not always the best daily at that). There are many reasons for this; often the adviser himself may have had some newspaper experience, or may have sniffed the heady perfume of printers' ink in some other fashion and welcomes the chance to try and duplicate this experience in his teaching, with a legitimate desire to pass on something which has been meaningful to him.

Or it may be that the youngsters have become enamored with the "journalese" bandied about so freely by newsmen and, enchanted with

this new skill which sets them apart from the herd, they strive further to imitate in every way and identify themselves as completely as possible with this wonderful world of scoops, flashes, and frantic deadlines.

More often, of course, it is simply tradition. "Our paper has always been this way, and the school wouldn't like it if we changed," — the time-worn, and time-honored, protest against the hard work of re-thinking, re-evaluating, becoming inventive. But how often does the publication schedule of a school paper approximate that of a city daily? Even at the college level many papers are published only thrice weekly or even weekly, and yet we find many school systems insisting on producing an imitative bedsheet school paper, albeit only

monthly — here, it would seem, is where the whole thing begins to become more and more unrealistic.

But, it will be argued, there are many successful weekly newspapers in professional journalism; why not follow their pattern? And here, doubtless, is the beginning of the real answer, for an analysis of the content and style of these papers will quickly give a clue as to how much of the school weekly can really be spot news, and how much more must necessarily be interpretive, background, projection, and news features.

Once this is recognized, it is but a step to purchase and analyze the prominent weekly news magazines, including the photo journalism products, and then decide which needs of the school: the weekly would be most adaptable to the newspaper (tabloid or bedsheet), the weekly news magazine, the weekly photo-news magazine, or (perhaps preferably from the educational point of view) experiments in all three, to be published fortnightly, monthly, or whenever the schedule permits.

Surely the staff which cannot publish as often as once a week will probably find much in the news magazine form or presentation to attract, and the more complete, thorough, featurized and interpretive style used in these publications will surely be recognized by the adviser as a fine tool for the practice of accuracy, variety, depth, imagination, and general reporting and writing in "3-D."

Sometimes it takes misfortunes to lead us to inventiveness. Recently in the City of Detroit where the public schools had long been addicted to the publication of fortnightly bedsheet imitations of the local metropolitan dailies, rising printing costs forced some of the schools to try offset tabloids, others

to try offset and letterpress news magazines complete with photo-news covers and pictorial journalism sections. The success of these is readily apparent by a comparison of the content and writing excellence with what was done before, as well as by the fresh presentation of school news and the new accent on the camera to illustrate or to present certain news items.

The magazine news article can be longer, can possess more real unity and artistic composition, and can introduce the author's own thoughts fairly in balance with those of others. It can skillfully weave fact-finding with the interviewing of experts, and above all can give opportunity to find and present the "news behind the news" which so rarely gets into the school paper. In format, the opportunity for sectionalizing, for presenting several pieces of different aspects on the same subject, for skillful use of illustration, is almost unlimited. Obsession with front page makeup and type harmonies can be replaced with obsession for completeness of coverage, accuracy of detail, and presentation of the material for reader service — preoccupations more defensible as general educational objectives than the too-often-found strictly vocational ones.

And if nothing more comes of the idea than simply analyzing this type of information medium and thinking of new ideas instead of constantly copying what has been done before, the serious consideration of a news magazine for your school will be well worth your, and especially your youngsters', time.

As to the inevitable protest that "The school wouldn't like it if we changed," the answer must surely be "Of course it won't, unless the change is a real improvement." And of course this is the ultimate reason for considering it at all.

Solving An Adviser's Problems

By Mrs. Frances K. Ryan

Editorial adviser of "The Criterion" of Central High School, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

Serving as the best voice of youth in print, scholastic journalism today truly is the Voice of America. The problem of helping teenagers do the best possible job on student publications constitutes the adviser's responsibility with this great instrument of education.

A much better publication results when the teacher really enjoys working with young writers than when the feeling of pressure from above propels the publication.

All of us face the same problem of the few students who spread themselves too thinly by becoming involved in every possible extra-curricular activity. In our school, we are now holding faculty committee meetings to determine how to limit these over-zealous leaders.

We are fortunate in Bridgeport to have two Sunday newspapers that encourage young journalists. These papers, The Post and The Herald, pay students for their articles, by the article (\$5.00) and by the inch (.15) respectively. Student photographers are also paid for each picture taken. We get free mats and cuts, often receiving them before the local paper uses them.

The reward of an adviser is the satisfaction that comes in assisting young minds and personalities to develop their thoughts, abilities, hopes, and aspirations.

The school publication is a "must" in every Junior and Senior High School. The paper, magazine, and yearbook reflect the school and its activities, and interpret them to the students, parents, friends, and taxpayers.

The publications adviser is the hardest working extra-curricular adviser in the school, yet, in most cases, the least appreciated. Some schools make an attempt to relieve the adviser by giving him smaller classes or one or two "free" periods, by adding a journalism class, adding compensation, relieving him of a home room — thus allowing time for journalistic work.

By keeping alert to what is going on in the world of scholastic journalism through membership in Columbia Scholastic Press Association, by availing oneself of the journalistic publications aids, magazines, handbooks, Adviser's Bulletin, etc., the adviser keeps abreast of the times.

Attendance at press conventions is a powerful student morale builder. Submitting the publication for criticism, attending clinics, having students attend the many helpful meetings that take place to hear someone else say the things the adviser has been preaching all along — these things do wonders for the staff.

Many schools are faced with the problem of mounting printing costs. We solved this problem by doubling our subscription price to ten cents and our advertising rate to one dollar per column inch. To give the pupils a better break, we added two extra pages to our four page, five column printed newspaper. We lost but five sales with the change-over.

Engraving costs run us between twenty and twenty-five dollars per issue. Some issues, we cut this

down practically to nothing thanks to the fine cooperation of our local newspapers. The total expense per issue runs to \$210.

In staff selection, our Journalism Class forms the editorial board. Reporters come to us through competition in the press club, composed of all four levels of students in the school.

Faculty cooperation is a matter of personality adjustment, both on the student and the teacher level. We never take students out of classrooms for interviews, but rely on before and after school assignments to take care of this business.

In our school, each branch of the paper is headed by its own adviser. The circulation staff obtains student signatures for the yearly subscriptions payable in installments as each issue is published. If the dime (cost per issue) does not appear within three days, the adviser sends a call slip to the tardy subscriber. Within a day the dime appears. A total of 1,155 students out of an enrollment of 1,200 subscribe.

Our ads sell at \$1.00 per column inch. Advertising revenue runs between \$86 and \$100 per issue. During Christmas and Easter issues, our problem is that of having too many ads. Students object to too many ads crowding out news and feature columns.

There is a tendency on the part of the senior class to want most of the news coverage. Something should be done to distribute fairly column allotment among the four classes in the high school. Better circulation figures result when this is done.

In too many schools, the job of handling the school publication is given to the newcomer on the faculty or perhaps shifted for a two year period among the members of the department.

By following a friendly and co-

operative policy rather than a high-handed one, the adviser gets full faculty cooperation.

We feel the school press has a definite responsibility to train the student body in encouraging worthwhile community projects, charitable endeavors as well as intra-school activities. We encourage publicity for Red Cross, Community Chest, Christmas Seal and all praise-worthy charities as a part of good citizenship training.

The better the staff is trained, the lighter the adviser's load. We take turns going to the printer, working on all the departments of the paper. By the end of the year, the editor in chief and the associate editors can take over full charge of the paper with a minimum of assistance. Some advisers may feel it is easier to handle the makeup themselves, but I feel it is unfair to the pupils to deny them the experience and the pleasure of really producing the paper completely.

We cannot deny that the ratings of Press Associations constitute one of the big problems of today. Every school likes to be thought "tops" and tries to improve its rating unless, of course, it rates Medalist. The comments and suggestions in the C. S. P. A. Score Book are religiously studied and improvements made where possible.

Often the adviser feels as though he is on trial, especially when the rival school produces a paper, magazine, or yearbook that rates higher than his. The competition of the athletic field has spread to the publications field.

Many schools have fine material, but the staff has not mastered the mechanics of headlines, makeup, and layout and as a result the paper lacks reader appeal. Studying specimen headline charts, holding consultations with the printer, reading the views of a scholastic

press authority, like Miss Mary Murray in her article on Makeup in the October 1954 Bulletin — scanning the Medalist and first class

exchanges you receive — all these cannot help but make a difference in your newspaper — and help you to solve the problems of an adviser.

A Top-Notch Job Of Interviewing

By Mary Elizabeth Hetherington

Adviser, "Student Lantern," Senior High School, Saginaw, Michigan.

Professor Roscoe Ellard of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University not long ago wrote of Allan Kellar of the *New York Telegram and Sun*:

"The very keel on which newspaper writing must plow its waters and breathe envigorating sea breezes is a *caring tremendously* for working at it hard and lovingly . . .

"If you don't want to know all about a little old woman dressed in the style of 20 years ago, if you don't notice that Winter is coming by the smell of roasting chestnuts at a subway kiosk, or that folks are more friendly in the country when snow is on the ground, you'd better sell bonds. . . ."

On the other hand, when you don't understand, you'd better ask, and ask, and ask, even at the risk of revealing an ignorance . . .

Caring tremendously . . .

Working at it hard and lovingly . . .

And asking questions . . .

These are the essence of a TOP-NOTCH JOB OF INTERVIEWING!

1. Preparation for the Interview

Caring tremendously involves, first of all, careful PREPARATION for the interview. For one you may need a command of languages such as French or German; for another you may need a knowl-

edge of science or music; for still others, you must know something of books. I well remember a youngster — a displaced person — who outlasted City reporters as well as radio interviewers during an atom bomb session with William L. Laurence of the *New York Times*. Why? He had a fluent command of German as well as a knowledge of science — and Mr. Laurence obviously enjoyed speaking in German!

The same youngster, interviewing Randolph Churchill, won everlasting (?) fame with the quick wit of an ad lib comedian when he quite simply turned to Mr. Churchill with the command: "Please hurry up and answer the rest of these questions — I've got to go to basketball practice!"

An interviewer should have access to a cameraman. Likewise, he should have access to *Who's Who in America* (if the person being interviewed is that well-known a figure), if for no other reason than to eliminate questions the answers to which he should have known beforehand!

Preparation ALWAYS involves ORGANIZATION OF ONE'S QUESTIONS, as well as a knowledge of the subject-matter on which one is going to "quiz" an authority. For organization results in elimina-

tion of overlapping questions — and thus gives more time for additional ones that are bound to pop up during any interview. *A penetrating question that goes right to the heart of an issue* gets a lot better results than a lot of vague questions that skirt around the edges.

Preparation frequently involves some ingenuity in securing an interview appointment — and on this point I believe the planned, direct, straight-forward approach is best. Mr. George MacGoffin Humphrey, Secretary of the Treasury, has been successfully interviewed in that manner. On the other hand Oscar Levant (after breaking his word as to an appointment) finally was cornered in the revolving door of a hotel. And a reporter we once knew got an inside view of Lindy's "Spirit of St. Louis" by donning a white uniform and posing as the milkman assigned to deliver two quarts for the flyer's cat!

2. *The Interview Itself*

Top-flight interviewing consists of a lot of answers all put together — answers you get from reading, observation, planning, evaluating — and improving. Therefore, what are the differences between the *expert interviewer* and the "cub" on a student publication? After all is said and done, it is the KNOW-HOW — the specific and minute technique that you find in the polished performer. By some peculiar magic the former "gets more facts and comments" from an interview.

How?

One moment the good interviewer uses the sweet, mellow personality, and charms his subject; in the next situation he perhaps must act just as confident and talk just as big as his cocky respondent. POISE — not haughtiness — is required on the part of the reporter.

In other words, THE MANNER in which one does his job is important during an interview. An insatiable inquisitiveness, an appearance of being on top of the job which he does with a "flair," his long-headedness in concentrating on THOSE THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT . . . all pay off!

Stir the interest of the man you want to interview, be alert to seize every opening and develop it. If you can not only interpret the man BUT ALSO CAN INTERPRET HIM TO HIMSELF, he will realize his drama and be stirred by it. Ask intelligent questions, observe the twinkle in the eye, the glint of anger; make your subject realize that YOU are reliable, accurate, and capable.

Remember, finally, that no two people are alike — not even identical twins! and that you MUST ALWAYS KEEP YOUR CURIOSITY ABOUT PEOPLE ALIVE! Most successful reporters will talk to all kinds of odd characters!

3. *The Writing Itself*

Write your interview AS SOON AFTER FINISHING THE INTERVIEW AS POSSIBLE!

Write for singleness of effect. Remember always that the good interview reads like a good short, dramatic story — or an essay. (The best preparation for good writing is READING GOOD STUFF — O'Henry, for instance). The good interview has STYLE as well as singleness of effect. It hangs together. (Remember, also, that style depends upon the *purpose* of your interview!)

And finally, don't be afraid to write — AND REWRITE! Richness of vocabulary — thus often gained — is one of the real tests of the good writer. Work, not only for the right sentence, but for the right word!

Why Not Better Sports Writing In School Papers?

By Charles F. Troxell

Former Adviser, "Frankford High Way," Frankford High School, Philadelphia, Penna.

Because of the prominent position occupied by sports in the life of the average high school student, the adviser to the publication would do well to check over the quality of writing that appears on this page.

At first sight, sports writing looks easy. Most American boys are very familiar with the chief sports: football, baseball, basketball, soccer, track. So much happens that there seems to be plenty of copy available. The sports writers read avidly the stories produced by professionals in the metropolitan papers — and then proceed to imitate only some parts of the style.

Why then is the quality of sports writing in so many school papers so poor? What can the adviser suggest to the sports writers to improve their stories?

It should be remembered that the opening paragraph of a well-written sports story contains seven essentials although not necessarily in this order: 1—name of the winner, 2—name of the loser, 3—name or indication of the sport, 4—when contest was played, 5—where contest was played, 6—final score, 7—outstanding characteristic of the contest. All of these are essential for the record.

The adviser might suggest to the boy that he examine the daily paper, for example, and see how the opening paragraphs of AP or UP stories handle these seven

essentials, especially those stories that contain one, two, or perhaps up to five or six paragraphs. (The date line, of course, takes care of two of the seven.) He should study them carefully for several sports.

Stories of local games in city papers are often far beyond the length of school sport stories, so that the writer can go into much greater detail in his opening paragraphs in city papers. The schoolboy is often tempted by the florid style of by-line writers in city dailies, with the result that he overwrites his lead paragraph and forgets some of the seven essentials. Enthusiasm and school patriotism are likely to lead him astray at this point, especially if he has a fairly long story to do.

Having mastered the technique of the seven essentials, the reporter is then ready for the next paragraphs, which should give the scoring highlights of the contest, not forgetting the outstanding opponents' performances, with names of players concerned and accurately spelled. Many school stories stress "our" side only.

With the essentials covered in the lead and the highlights given in the two or more succeeding paragraphs, the writer may then have enough space left in which to get down to the more minor phases of the contest. By then his word allotment may be exhausted.

The deadliest way to kill reader interest is to give a straight, de-

tailed account in chronological order from start to finish, play-by-play. The average reader will quit long before the end.

When several contests are to be covered in one issue, the writer must be exceedingly careful to give most of the seven essentials in the lead, unless he writes a "blanket opener" summarizing the contests covered in the ensuing story. Then the technique is slightly different, but the general idea of writing is the same: give the highlights of scoring plays preference over other facts.

All of the suggestions above have to do with stories of past contests. How many details can be given will depend on the word length of the assignment.

Stories of future contests require a somewhat different treatment in the lead paragraph, but the writer must keep in mind as many of the seven essentials as fit the situation. Winner, loser, and final score are, of course, not in the picture.

Here the writer should pay chief attention to the significance of the coming contest in his opening words, relying on facts and not using ballyho. Place, date, and starting time have high importance but our poor openers. First mention of the opponents should give the school names, not merely nicknames, even if these are well-known to the school readers.

The writer of an important story should have at hand a good set of statistical information on the play of the two teams in the current season, their standing in the league, together with accurate information on contests of previous years between the two schools, plus possible stars for spectators to watch. Again, the writer must remember that his own school is not the only one in the game! Names of individual members of the op-

osing team are too often overlooked. Somewhere in or near the story may be given the record of all past games in that sport between the schools, if accurate information is available for a tabulation.

Writers' opinions on the outcome have no place here, but some good quotes from coaches may be used, if available. Editorializing must be rigidly avoided; there should be enough substantial facts for a good informative story, without recourse to opinion.

From a somewhat broader point of view, the adviser should be on the lookout to see that a complete sports picture is given by the sports page as a whole. Secondary teams and secondary sports deserve attention. If a sports comment column is run, the adviser should be careful to see that fair play is extended and that no one person is featured at the expense of another, perhaps equally deserving of notice. The same might be said with regard to teams as well.

It might be well to exclude all copy having to do with college or professional sports. The sports page, like the other pages, should be for the school and of the school. Now and then schoolboys feel compelled to give their views on college and professional contests. A school usually develops enough news within itself to produce a strong sports page without this copy. Exception might be made in the case of high interest in some local college or university, but even in this case the situation is usually taken care of by the higher institution itself.

Inaccurate writing, of course, has no place in the school sports story. Sometimes inaccuracy may creep in because the adviser does not know the facts. The writer must be well informed on the techniques of the sports in question. Both adviser

and reporter will probably hear from the coach and the team if facts are not accurate.

Solvenly writing should be caught by the student copy-reader and the work of dubiously prepared writers should be double-checked by the adviser. There is no excuse for such things as "The team is ready for their game," so often found.

Each reporter should be rigidly instructed in stylebook usages, so that the paper does not carry Varsity, varsity, Jay Vees, J. V.'s, Jayvees, JV's, the seven-yard line, a 6-yard gain, and other discrepancies of style usage. Similarly the sports staff should adopt standard forms for lineups, summaries, and the like, so that these are uniform throughout the page.

Why We Changed From Letterpress To Offset

By Rita M. Murphy

Literary adviser, "Snyder Life," Henry Snyder High School, Jersey City, New Jersey.

Four years ago, when I "inherited" the advisershif of the school newspaper, I was unhappily aware of my shortcomings. As a member of the history department I had long ceased to lose sleep over a split infinitive. It would be difficult to criticize a piece of writing from a literary viewpoint.

The members of the staff had worked the previous term without an adviser. While they generously welcomed me, they were self-confident, and adept in the use of a professional jargon which kept me at sea for some time. My predecessor, Miss Frances Sirota, very graciously guided me through the first issue, leaving me appalled at what lay ahead when I would be on my own.

My inexperience caused me to proceed with caution. I listened and observed. I found that many ideas which sounded good to me were summarily dismissed by the staff with "Uh-uh. Too expensive." I began to realize that we were working with a very tight budget. To make the situation a little more acute, the Principal regretfully in-

formed us that in future, because of a Board of Education ruling, he would be unable to provide school funds should there be a newspaper deficit.

Many advisers and staffs, lacking experience and assurance, must be facing similar problems today. In the hope that you other harassed people may gain something from what we learned, we will explain the problem and our solution.

Ours was a letterpress job, on glossy paper, issued four times a term. Because of budget restrictions we could allow but one picture on the front page. It usually measured 2½ inches high by one column (two inches). Two other pictures of similar dimensions might be allowed per issue. Our readers, while otherwise apparently satisfied, were loud in their demand for "more pictures, and bigger ones."

All line drawings, cartoons, crossword puzzles or eye-catching devices of any kind were prohibitive in cost.

What to do? We weighed the alternatives.

A mimeographed paper? There were many arguments against this. The amount of stencils and paper necessary to produce 2,000 readable copies of our printed material was staggering. It would require a staff of trained typists to produce the work. It would make unavailable for other school uses the mimeographing facilities in the building. Finally, would our students be satisfied with the appearance of a mimeographed sheet after a printed paper?

A veritype paper? We had an excellent example of the work in a nearby community. But the low cost was outweighed by the initial outlay for the machine, and the difficulty in finding room to house it. Again, it would be unfair to ask the already overtaxed commercial department to assume responsibility for its operation and upkeep.

A photo-offset job?

We were familiar with this process in the yearbook field, but did not consider it particularly adapted to newspaper use.

Curtail the number of issues? By publishing three instead of four issues per term we would be nearer our budget requirements.

Our business adviser, Mr. August Meyer, suggested that we consult our printer about the problem. We found him eager to help us. He was in the process of installing photo-offset because of the many yearbook demands. The advantages became immediately apparent. The outward appearance of our paper would remain unchanged. We could now have a picture up to 40 sq. in. for about half the cost of "cuts" measuring six sq. in. Art work, special column heads, crossword puzzles and cartoons would involve no extra cost.

While the expense per issue would remain about the same as it

had been, our paper now could have all the extras which would have been financially impossible in the letterpress method. By cutting one issue per term we could balance our budget, relieve the school funds, increase reader interest and satisfaction, and reduce staff frustration.

We adopted the offset method, and we have not regretted our decision.

A word of caution, however. We were lucky. Our printer was equipped to handle our work. Where such jobs must be "farmed out" there is an increased cost which you must pay. Inquire about this item before you leap into photo-offset. Another thing: The process requires more time, since it involves two separate steps. We have an earlier deadline, which means that we must save place for late developments and "real news." These can be delivered to the printer with corrected proofs. There is no time for correction of late copy, however, and errors are bound to occur. On the whole, since we try to turn in very accurate work, and are blessed with a clairvoyant printer, mistakes have been rare.

One last hint: A good clear photograph is doubly important in offset, since it becomes a *picture of a picture*. Do not chance blurry, grey, or indistinct prints. The face you mar may be your own.

We have had great satisfaction from our offset paper. To all but a very discerning eye, it has the appearance of letter press work. Our readers are delighted that we have finally "gone modern" with the pictures they find so vital. We are able to keep within our budget without raising the price of the paper.

If these sound like answers to your problem, why not try offset and see for yourself?

Notes From The Editor's Desk

Hurricane Hazel was an unannounced participant in the 14th Annual Conference and Short Course on Yearbook Production held at Columbia University on October 15 and 16. Fortunately, she wept prior to the arrival of the delegates and again after they were safely under cover that evening in downtown hotels, eating places, and theatres. She blew and blew; but the delegates were undaunted, unharmed, and not the slightest bit inconvenienced.

There were 846 in attendance, the largest gathering ever and an increase of 246 over the registration of 1953. Yearbook entries in the 20th Annual Contest and Critique went up by 94 over 1953 to a total of 1136. Everything in CSPA seems to grow and grow.

The luncheon speaker was Robert Everett Hughes, assistant to the publisher of Sports Illustrated, the first pictorial sports weekly in history. It was an appropriate event because Time, Inc., the sponsors, went through the same formula in planning their magazine as the typical adviser and staff does in planning a yearbook. They, however, made dummy after dummy, real ones that looked exactly like the final copy, revising, changing, adding, and subtracting before they hit on the finished product.

There was a thought in that, for most yearbook people make only one, an incomplete sketch, and let it go at that. A few old books that can be cut up, together with improvised write-ups, long before agreement is reached on the final format, would do much to help produce the book that is really wanted. This tip from the professionals should not be ignored.

* * *

The only complaint at the 1954 Conference was that it was too short. The CSPA tries to do what the membership wants it to do. The big question is now whether or not to lengthen the conference. Some people like to ride in during the morning and start the conference shortly after noon. The first extension would be a morning session on Friday. What do the advisers think about this?

* * *

Something new has been added this year to CSPA procedures. Every member-school received its contest or conference announcements by first class mail. This was suggested by one of the staff members in the CSPA office. It is felt the experiment worked, for a check of the conference registration showed clearly that delegates came for the first time from schools that have long entered their books in the contests but never before attended the fall meeting. While pleasure was expressed in having such a large number at the Conference, the basic satisfaction came from the fact that delegations experienced at first hand the participation that precedes the making of a good book.

* * *

Satisfaction has also been expressed that the announcements have been received so much earlier than in previous years. The yearbook conference was made up in June and printed in early July. It was addressed and prepared for mailing during the summer and delivered to the post office before Labor Day. The newspaper-magazine contest announcement was prepared in June, printed in early August, were mailed October 20. The fact that nearly 80% of the

yearbooks were received on the July 1 deadline, plus the energy of the regular staff members who spent the summer in the office, made all this possible.

* * *

The tea held on the Friday afternoon of each conference and convention at the Men's Faculty club by the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association to honor the advisers in attendance, has become one of the highlights of each gathering. It is a delightful break in convention routine. Those who come are happy they did, for one meets friends and associated from all over the country. Oftentimes, this is the one and only occasion in the course of a year when they do meet.

But for some reason the teas are not well attended. Some say the "Men's" scares the women. The club is open to women or the CSPAA would not hold the teas there. Some say they can't find it. The address is listed in the programs. The club is as much a part of the University as Alma Mater herself and is only one short block behind the Chapel. It is on the map in the convention program.

After some thought on the matter, the CSPAA President, Dr. Sigmund J. Sluszka, has authorized the printing of a formal invitation which will be inserted with the tickets and badges forwarded to a school when it registers its delegation to the annual conventions and conferences. So, from now on, gentlemen AND LADY advisers, will please step up for their tea or coffee and cakes at the Men's Faculty Club from 3-5 o'clock on the Friday afternoon of each CSPA conference (October) and convention (March).

* * *

The psalmist's saying about "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength"

is always getting new proof. The Bulletin editor was asked to talk to the Elementary School Division group at the 1954 30th CSPA convention on humor. He had never before addressed a group so young, was not too certain how to begin, and so started with the question, "What is humor?" Among the answers came this one from a little girl: "Humor is something funny but not silly." This writer has been looking for some time for a meaningful definition of humor.

* * *

Miss Mary Elizabeth Hetherington, a contributor to the pages of this Bulletin, is the co-author and chief research worker and writer of a 114-page book entitled, "Growth Of Secondary Education In The World's First Lumber Capital." Recently published, the book is really the history of Saginaw High School, Saginaw, Michigan, where Miss Hetherington has taught many years.

THE BULLETIN

The Bulletin is devoted to the interests and problems of faculty advisers of school newspapers, yearbooks, and magazines. Seventeen hundred copies of this January 1955 issue were printed.

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The editor is Mr. Bryan Barker, active editorial faculty adviser of a weekly, six-page paper, The Mercersburg News, The Mercersburg Academy, Mercersburg, Penna.

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Guide To Good Books

By Hans Christian Adamson

Colonel, U. S. Air Force, retired. Author in the fields of aviation, astronomy, popular science, biography, history, transportation, nature, etc. The reviews appearing in this January 1955 issue of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association Bulletin, published quarterly at Columbia University in the City of New York, are also distributed to four hundred United States Armed Services libraries in thirty-six Commands throughout the world. Readers please address all inquiries regarding "Guide To Good Books" to: Hans Christian Adamson, P. O. Box No. 67, Saratoga, California.

A good book for a bedside table, and mainly because of its happy approach to the facts and fiction of American folktales and similar generation-to-generation traditions, is Burl Ives' impressive and enjoyable volume of *Tales of America* (World — \$3.95 — Illus., Non-Fic.). In this well assembled collection, for which there should be a genuine demand, Mr. Ives, who rightfully has been called one of our nation's greatest living storytellers, presents a dozen or two of some of the true and some of the make-believe-'tis-true tales of early Americana that added to his stature as a guitar-strumming raconteur and balladier. Down-river, up-valley, over prairie, through forests; on farms or in towns, we follow the trend of history as it spread from mouth to mouth in the old days before newspapers, magazines and airwaves came into being.

True to his reputation for meeting every deadline, Grantland Rice — known across the land to writers and readers as Granny — made his last. He had barely finished *The Tumult And The Shouting* (Barnes — \$5.00 — Illus., Biog.) before he went forth on that last great assignment all mortals must meet. As was true with virtually every thing

he did, the world is better off and happier because Granny was given the chance to complete this fine human document of the champions he knew in competitive sports — amateur as well as professional — during his long and productive career as a sports writer. Half a century, of nearly world-wide sports page writing, lies between the covers of this unusual book. Step by step it takes us up the rough and tough ladder to the pinnacle of champions. There we meet, in the flesh and as they are, such top-notchers of sports as Dempsey, Tunney, Helen Jacobs, Bobby Jones, Babe Didrickson, Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb — together with the high magnitude stars of tennis, football, hockey and all the other sports that create copy for the presses and thrills for the multitudes.

One of the drawbacks of this the Age of Science is that it takes a great deal of study on the part of the proverbial man-in-the-street to find out just what and where the score is in atomic realm of the astronomical or vice versa. To the rescue comes Dr. Fritz Kahn, author of *Design Of The Universe* (Crown — \$5.00 — Illus., Non-Fic.), a volume which literally tries to

explain the many new space frontier and universe milestones established by researchers and mathematicians of our times. Dr. Kahn has a dynamic way of presentation that makes the book not only informative but readable — almost entertaining — although entertainment is not its purpose. The panorama of cosmic phenomena unfolded by the author is further enlivened by scores of illustrations that explain the universe, our solar system, our earth, and our places in the great structure of things. A welcome gift to amateur astronomers.

It would be natural to assume that a book that deals with the management of a pawn shop would convey a picture of the gloomy and unhappy side of life. With that thought in mind, I picked up a book entitled *Hock Shop* (Random — \$3.75 — Illus., Biog.) and authored by William R. and Florence K. Simpson, members of the Simpson dynasty which, through generations of pawn brokering in England and in this country, has come to be regarded as the Morgans of their particular branch of finance. Picture then my surprise on discovering that pawnbrokers meet and deal with rich, interesting, honest and glamorous people. Also that they, in the passing of time behind their iron grailings, learn a great deal about life in high as well as low places of living. Of course, like all "uncles," the Simpsons had their eyes peeled for thieves and other law breakers, but some of the names of clients mentioned in the book would seem to belong on social and financial pages rather than on pawn tickets. The material on diamonds and other precious stones is intensely interesting and the book itself is a novel and worthwhile departure in the realm of reading.

John Beecroft undertook a hard task — from which he emerged with flying colors — when he set out to make a one volume collection of W. Somerset Maugham's writings. The pleasant results are now in print under the title: *Mr. Maugham Himself* (Doubleday — \$3.95 — Fic.). Starting off with *Of Human Bondage*, the 688 page book offers excerpts from such readable nuggets as *The Vagrant Mood*, *Ah King*, *Don Fernando*, and *A Writers' Notebook*. Five feet of shelf reduced to two inches of masterly condensation.

Virtually every field of human knowledge is represented in the *Basic Everyday Encyclopedia* (Random — \$2.95 — 576 pages). Prepared by the publishers of *The American College Dictionary*, this thickly-packed volume is just about the most concise book of its kind that I have ever cast eye on. Of handy size, it is self-indexing and offers information in more than 12,000 main paragraphs which reduce even the most complicated subject to amazingly simple brass tacks. One reason for its huge fund of data is an ingenious and easily absorbed system of abbreviations and symbols, many of which are standard in encyclopedic use.

Over the years, Wallace Kirkland has observed a lot of the world and its ways through the sharp and recording lens of his camera. Some of the more interesting things he has seen and recorded in his role of periodical photographer appear in his *Recollections of A 'Life' Photographer* (Houghton Mifflin — \$3.50 — Biog.). Despite any conclusions the reader might make to the contrary, this book about pictures, is close to zero on the subject of illustrations. A mere 14 photographs. But do not let this shortcoming stop you from getting this unique

autobiography of a man who has been virtually everywhere and photographed life in its stride. Beyond the question of a doubt, it contains some of the best natural history reading to be published in many a moon. Subjects that run at chapter length include hen pecking, prairie dogs, straw stacks, pond life, ant lions and dragon fliers. Men you meet run from General MacArthur to Gandhi, from Casey Jones to an Iowa farmer.

The mysteries and secrets that surround the birth and growth of atomic science have tended to build a fence around the men whose minds have brought the marvels of electronics and atomics to strange and wholly unexpected heights. Like their complex science, they have become lofty, almost awesome creatures in the minds of their fellow men. But even as heroes are not such to their valets, so it seems that the awesome lords of ultra-mathematics are not such to their wives. At least, that is the case with respect to one lord and his wife. Her name is Laura Fermi. Her husband is Enrico Fermi, an architect of the Atomic Age who saw the light of day in Italy but who is now one of America's — in fact the world's — leading physicists. The book title is: *Atoms In the Family* (Chicago Univ. — \$4.00 — Illus., Biog.). If nothing else, Mrs. Fermi proves that a woman can indeed keep a secret. The book is saved from being too stern by an endless little golden vein of merriment that seems to twinkle in Mrs. Fermi's eyes and find reflection in those of her famous husband.

There may be a major event or two that escaped inclusion in *Almanac For Americans* (Greenberg — \$5.00 — Non-Fic.) but if that is the case, I failed to find it. In this book, the author, Willis

Thornton, has succeeded in pegging one or more important North American events on each and every day of the year thereby producing a novel kind of reference book that should be useful to many kinds of people. For one thing, it proves that the Director of Human Events and Destiny does not believe in a five day week or half-days on Saturdays. A book like this usually stands or falls with its index and, happily, the author has created an excellent one.

The backdrop on the stage of life through which Paul I. Wellman has travelled includes the West during the closing days of Indian uprisings, outlaw gangs and fast-rolling stagecoaches. He knew men who knew Dodge City "when" and worked with cowhands. As a result Mr. Wellman knows and loves and understands the history of the West, helpful factors in his authorship of *Glory, Gold and God* (Doubleday — \$6.00 — Non-Fic.), the second volume in the Mainstream of America series published by Doubleday. Mr. Wellman sets out from the bold premise that "liars sometimes make history" and proves his point. At any rate, he spins a fantastic yarn about Texas and the South West from the days of the Conquistadores to the era of gunmen and cattle barons. History in a readable style.

Thirty Years is the catch-all title of a collection of stories, articles, and essays from the pen of John P. Marquand which, up to now, has never appeared in book form. (Little-Brown — \$5.00 — Misc.). This is not a book to be taken lightly or to be read rapidly. In it are items that reveal one of the world's greatest writers of our times at his excellent best. Even those who are not Marquand fans will find deep enjoyment in such war-

time comments as appear under the caption of Wars: Men and Places. Not to omit the charm and the power scattered at random among Random Pieces. Reading *Thirty Years* makes one grateful that Mr. Marquand is not only a fine writer but also a great reporter.

One needs no reminder to recommend *That Reminds Me . . .* by Former Vice-President Alben W. Barkley (Doubleday — \$4.50—Illus., Auto-Biog.). This book has everything an autobiography should have — and seldom has — namely punch, purpose, humor, criticism toward self and tolerance toward others — a robust and penetrating self-portrait by a prominent politician who has given most of his life to public service in the rough and tumble world of elective office. That he is still an able campaigner (heading into eighty) was proven by the author in November when he ran for and was elected to the United States Senate. This book reveals the mechanics of running a nation and a world in peace and in war with some first hand close-ups of the mechanics who do the running. The scope of *That Reminds Me* is not only broad but unexpectedly and deeply human. Interlarded with comment on big-time politics are down-to-earth anecdotes of the kind that have always illuminated the Senator's public and private comments. In the language of TV — it has a big laugh track.

Green as meadows and tall as haystacks are the heaps of nostalgia created by Stewart Holbrook's *Down On The Farm* (Crown — \$\$5.00 — Illus., Pic.). Here indeed, is a picture book among picture books. It is, as it proclaims, an illustrated treasury of country life in America in the good old days. With lively and well-rounded infor-

mative captions, Mr. Holbrook takes us down on the farm back in the days when hayburners rather than gas engines provided the motive power; and where manpower rather than motors did the heavy work. At work, at leisure, at play— in winter and in summer—we see the farm and its farmers; boys behind the plow; hired hands driving cattle to milking and sis ready with the pail; mother baking and cooking with a wood-burning oven — pappa strutting over his fine showing at the county fair. Hundreds of photographs of the American Way, which in this case is a shady country lane with old Dobbin hauling the rural mail and the family shopping via mail order catalogue all the way to Chicago.

Fragments of radio shows, that not so many years ago made the entire nation laugh, brighten the pages of Fred Allen's *Treadmill to Oblivion* (Little-Brown — \$4.00 — Biog.). Here we learn about Mr. Allen's not-so-funny battles with sponsors, fellow comedians, and network veepes in charge of humor — all presented in a lively vein but undertones of sharpness. All in all, one gathers that a comedian's lot is not necessarily chucklesome. From start to finish, the book reflects Mr. Allen's lively understanding of people and carries an ad-lib tone that makes it a monologue without monotone.

Those of us who now and then feel in need of charging our spiritual batteries — and who does not — will welcome *America's Spiritual Recovery* (Revell — \$2.50 — Non-Fic.) by the Rev. Edward L. R. Elson for which J. Edgar Hoover of FBI fame has written the introduction. As he sees it, America is entering upon a much needed period of religious recovery.

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